

**THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:**

5 1. A rubber access mat, comprising:

a rubber slab having opposed side edges defining a width and opposed end edges defining a length;

a rigidifying grid of reinforcing wire embedded within the rubber slab and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced wires extending between the opposed side edges for most of  
10 the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced wires extending between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab;

the reinforcing wire being not less than number ten gauge wire.

15 2. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the reinforcing wire is made of steel.

3. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the rubber slab is made from recycled vehicular tires.

20 4. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges are the same gauge of wire.

25 5. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges are the different gauges of wire.

30 6. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have the same relative spacing.

7. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have different

relative spacing.

5 8. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 2, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number three gauge and a relative spacing of approximately three inches.

10 9. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 2, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches.

15 10. The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 2, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number ten gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number ten gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches.